

Abstract of the Disclosure

A foreign matter monitoring system comprises: a production management system which manages the processing of workpieces in a manufacture line; foreign matter monitors mounted as on-machine equipment in plural process processing apparatuses of the manufacture line, said foreign matter monitors each having an optical head containing a detecting optical system for irradiating a workpiece with light and a detecting optical system for receiving reflected and scattered light from the workpiece and converting the received light to a detection image signal and an A/D converter for converting the detection image signal, which is obtained through conversion by the detecting optical system, to a detection digital image signal; and a base system having a control unit for acquiring control information, a buffer memory for storing said detection digital image signal which is acquired from each foreign matter monitor, a database storing inspection recipes each associated with a foreign matter monitor and an image signal processing unit used for, based on a detection digital image signal associated with a foreign matter monitor and acquired from the buffer memory, judging whether foreign matter and other defects are present on a workpiece according to an inspection recipe which is selected for the corresponding foreign matter monitor based

on control information from the control unit.